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Ceiling on buses

* 104 Q.—Sri S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Electricity be pleased to state whether the Government have any proposal to impose a ceiling as to the number of buses to be owned by a person?

The Hon. Sri V. RAMAIAH : The answer is in the negative.

Sri S. K. SAMBANDHAN : Sir, in view of the fact that the existing rules provide for the grant of permits only to fleet-owners, most of the routes go to fleet-owners only. In view of this, will the Government consider the question of making it easy for other applicants and new entrants also to get permits?

The Hon. Sri V. RAMAIAH : Sir, if the hon. Member is genuinely interested to go in for bus transport, I am sure that we have made provisions in the last Government Order providing for new entrants to come into this trade.

Sri S. K. SAMBANDHAN : That is only for routes less than fifteen miles. Some four or five routes have been given in South Arcot district to different people. But on appeal they have been given to fleet-owners only.

The Hon. Sri V. RAMAIAH : The complaint which I receive is that the fleet-owners are more or less barred by the present Government Order and the statement of the hon. Member, I am sure, would have been well considered by the Regional Transport Authority and on appeal by the State Transport Authority before giving any route to any category of bus operators.

Sri V. M. SURENDRAM : இந்த ரீதியில் எவ்வளவ பேர்களுக்கு நம் மாநிலத்தில் அளிக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது?

The Hon. Sri V. RAMAIAH : கனம் அங்கத்தினர் தனிக் கேள்வி போட்டால், பதில் சொல்கிறேன்.

Sri V. V. RAMASWAMI : இந்தப் புது முறைப்படி என்னென்ன தகுதிகள், நிபந்தனைகள் விதிக்கப்பட்டிருக்கின்றன? தெரிந்தால் என் போன்றவர்கள் அப்ளிகேஷன் போடலாம்.

The Hon. Sri V. RAMAIAH : அந்த ஜி.ஓ.வின் விவரம் அறியத் தனிக் கேள்வி போடலாம்.

Sri MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : On a point of order, Sir. With due deference to my esteemed Friend, I may say that he may not have humour in the question. In the question he has put, the hon. Member wanted to elicit information. To turn round and say that 'if the hon. Member is interested to have such a type of business' will—for his information I am telling—give in the press a bad reading. No doubt, the Hon. Minister did not mean any disrespect to the hon. Member. But from the way in which it was put, it will be construed in a very different meaning.

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THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : I am sorry, Sir, that the hon. Member has completely misunderstood the trend of the question and the trend of the answer. I am perfectly happy to say that the hon. Member who put that supplementary question has correctly understood what I wanted to say. There is no quarrel or misunderstanding between us. I am so sorry that a very active Member like Sri Raza Khan should misunderstand my simple answer.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : I have not misunderstood. Whatever be his reply, that reply is not intended purely for the Member who has put the question, but for the House as a whole. But the way in which he has put it, i.e., "If the member is interested to take up this business, I am giving permits for distances within the range of fifteen miles" will be construed in a different meaning. The Hon. Minister might not have meant it. But from the way and the manner in which he has put it, it may be construed in a different meaning.

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : I would like to make it clear again that in the reply which I had given there was nothing personal about the Member. I only say that when he put that question, he put it for the general public and not for this House only. I told him that till recently new comers were not more or less getting permits, and that the recent amendment had enabled new comers to come in. I have never said that the Member is interested in coming to bus transport. I have never put it that way.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I do not think there is any harm even if he has said that he is coming into it.

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : It is in the interests of the public, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is an ordinary and harmless remark that usually comes up in discussion. I do not think the hon. Member can take any exception to it.

Taxis

* 105 Q.—VIDWAN T. MUTHUKANNAPPAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Electricity be pleased to state—

(*a*) the number of baby taxis and big taxis that are plying in Ootacamund; and

(*b*) whether any exemption with regard to the fixing of meters has been granted to the taxis plying in Ootacamund?

THE HON. SRI V. RAMAIAH : (*a*) Baby taxis—16.

Big taxis—39.

(*b*) Under the Madras Motor Vehicles Rules, taxis plying in the mufassal may be fitted either with taxi-meters or milometers. The question of exempting them from fitment of taxi-meters does not, therefore, arise.